

Sisters and Brothers, we pray together: Come Lord  
Jesus! 8/15/2021

### Covenant Life

- Our next in-person Community Gathering will be next Sunday at 4pm in the MSMCS gym as we are now having in-person prayer meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month.
- The Community Coordinators are studying and praying through the situation with covid and making the best possible decisions regarding our meetings. We are requesting that those not fully vaccinated wear a face covering and practice social distancing.
- If you were not able to attend our last Gathering, you can listen to the audio [here](#), review the Word Gift summary [here](#), and read the transcript [here](#).
- Your ongoing financial support is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222.

**Reflection** - My reflections during this pandemic have attempted to bring us together as a Community meditating on the Holy Spirit speaking to us through the Church liturgical readings. Today I would like to take a different approach and share about the call to spiritual maturity and the need for discernment.

One of my biggest take-aways from our [Let The Fire Fall Challenge](#) was the exhortation to **fully engage with God in His calling** including exercising our spiritual muscles. This has also been the theme of recent conferences with other community leaders. We are convinced that the Holy Spirit is calling His people to **spiritual maturity**. He wants us empowered by the Holy Spirit to embrace the Charismatic Gifts and incorporate them into our daily lives.

Throughout our history this has always been one of the primary blessings of our Sunday Gatherings...not just a time to praise and worship God but also a special time to listen to Him speak to us through the Spiritual Gifts and His Word. During normal times we have a leader discerning the gifts and they would prioritize prophecies and scripture and hold sharings toward the end as time permits.

The coordinators have had a few conversations recently and are in full agreement that we want to **call forth** prophesy, words of knowledge, and other spiritual word gifts. We are also encouraging everyone to recommit to spending quality time with our bibles and **bring forth** scripture passages that we discern are meant for the body. As coordinators, we want to emphasize and prioritize hearing **directly from God** when we gather as a body for our Sunday prayer meetings.

It is important to remember that, when we deliver a discerned spiritual message from the microphone on Sunday, we are presuming to be speaking on behalf of the Lord. This is why discernment is so appropriate. Getting up to the microphone is a response to a call, a prayerful discernment that the Holy Spirit is specifically asking us to speak a message to the body on His behalf.

This past Pentecost we experienced a joyous time of extended prayer and praise (we always start with praise and worship to create an environment where we can truly hear Him speak). It was great to break away that Sunday from our 'pattern' and have this extended time of just praising the Lord. We explained then that we were open to spiritual gifts and scriptures throughout the meeting. The flexibility of integrating praise, songs, and spiritual gifts enabled an awesome experience of His presence. Part of what made it work that day was not having sharings that can possibly disrupt the message.

The reality is that we are an extended family with so much going on in our lives. God is at work, and we want to share the blessings with our family. As a Community, and as time permits, we welcome praise reports and other sharing and testimonies that build up the body. We want these to continue but we are specifically asking that sharing be held until later in the Gathering so we can prioritize hearing directly from God before we hear from one another. This also enables us to each discern whether our sharing fits in with what God is speaking about. **Discernment** is needed for sharings also. Finally, when we are giving a sharing at the microphone, we should try to get to the main point and focus on what God did or revealed to you in the experience.

Now some folks may be intimidated with speaking on behalf of God. This is a Spiritual Gift God wants for his children. But it requires openness to praying for it, receiving it, responding to it, and practicing it so that we are comfortable, and trust that God will use us. It is about surrendering and allowing the Holy Spirit to work and speak through us. Our job is to listen and discern. We need to ask ourselves the question, is this from the Holy Spirit? Is God asking me to speak these words on His behalf? Is this message for the body at this time and not for me personally? Is God prompting me to share this message now? The Holy Spirit needs us to be His instruments. If we do not respond, His work cannot come forth. If we are not sure we can seek out additional discernment, but during the pandemic we still need everyone discerning, especially until we restart formal discernment at our Gatherings.

Please do not interpret my sharing as wanting to slow or in any way reduce the sharings at the Gathering. In fact, my message is that the coordinators are asking that we actively increase the exercise of the spiritual gifts especially at the beginning of our gatherings. During our opening praise and worship time please ask the Holy Spirit to give you words for the body and after you discern that it is His Word for the body at this time, come forth promptly to the microphone to share on His behalf. We need to hear from you. God has given us His gifts and will bring them forth through us if we say Yes.

*Let us pray "Holy Spirit, we are a people born out of a surrender to You and openness to yield to You. We invite You into our lives and desire to be so fully attune to You that we can be You in word and deed. Today I recommit to spending quality time with You every day, listening, to Your prompting. I recommit to being open to the exercise of Your spiritual gifts in my life. Bring opportunities for me to exercise the gifts You have given me and build my confidence that I am walking the path that You have set for me. I love You and surrender to You. Amen."*

God bless,  
David